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STAFF TRAINING  
*for* PERSONNEL  
*in* INSTITUTIONS  
*for* JUVENILE  
DELINQUENTS

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NATIONAL PROBATION AND PAROLE ASSOCIATION

STAFF TRAINING  
*for* PERSONNEL  
*in* INSTITUTIONS  
*for* JUVENILE  
DELINQUENTS

report of a workshop

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE  
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## preface

Most of our institutions for juvenile delinquents are now aware that just providing a secure, controlled environment for the boys and girls committed to them by the courts is not enough. They must also prepare these children and youth so that when they return to the outside world they will accept society and society will accept them.

As an early step in that direction, institutions began to add to their staffs representatives of various disciplines, including psychology, social work, psychiatry, sociology. These professional workers bring new insight to the treatment of children—insights lacked by the employees already on the staff, most of whom have no clinical training. However, the new staff members in turn lack the valuable experience that the untrained workers have gained during their years with the institution.

To work out ways of utilizing the skills and knowledge of both of these groups for the betterment of the total group—and to more effectively use training in accomplishing the institution's goal—35 persons attended a workshop. Each was closely connected to training personnel in institutions for juvenile delinquents. They came from 17 States.

This publication is a report of that meeting. It addresses itself to any institution for juvenile delinquents that has training problems. Perhaps that means all such institutions. It's designed to stimulate new ways to perform a hard task, to help institutions break away from the static, routine methods of in-service training, to clarify the usefulness of such training, and to give some guidance to the thoughtful and the venturesome.

The ideas presented are the result of the thinking of the entire group who attended the workshop and do not necessarily represent policy or standards of any one agency. How these ideas are used will possibly vary as much as the problems in the institutions making use of them.

The Children's Bureau is most grateful to all taking part in developing this publication, and to the agencies and organizations for making possible their attendance. Much of the success of the workshop is due to the valuable contribution of the six leaders: Dr. Harry R. Brickman, Prof. Eleanor Cranefield, Dr. Girard Franklin, Dr. Gordon Hearn, Dr. Lloyd Ohlin, and Prof. Robert Vinter. We are especially indebted to the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, which saw the need and provided the funds for the undertaking. We also wish to thank the Graduate School of Social Work, Rutgers, the State University, for providing the academic setting for the workshop. Such a connection with a School of Social Work is most important for in-service training programs. Our thanks are also extended to the Council on Social Work Education, the National Probation and Parole Association, and the National Association of Training Schools and Juvenile Agencies for cooperating in this venture.

*Katherine B. Oettinger*

KATHERINE B. OETTINGER  
Chief, Children's Bureau

# I THE PLANNING

## *The needs*

Institutions dealing with juvenile delinquents are faced with many problems today. Among the most urgent, is the acute need for raising the standards of personnel in this field so that they can effectively discharge some newly conceived goals of service. It is only recently that any large proportion of these institutions has come to consider their goal a rehabilitative procedure as well as a custodial function. The job of reorienting and training staff members, of bringing in new kinds of professionally trained staff members, and coordinating their activities and goals with well established procedures, is recognized as one of the pressing needs in the field today.

The urgency of this need was underlined by the many requests for help in developing staff training programs received by the Division of Juvenile Delinquency Service of the Children's Bureau from institutions for delinquent children across the country. The pressure of this need and the admitted lack of resources, knowledge, and skill to initiate productive staff training programs stimulated the Training Branch of the Division of Juvenile Delinquency Service to call together six people currently engaged in staff training programs to explore ways of handling this difficult problem. This group readily identified a number of obstacles that stand in the way of staff training:

- 1 The lack in many institutions of an explicit institutional philosophy which makes training desired and effective. The philosophy within an institution may vary from cottage to cottage, from work group to work group, and from individual to individual. The different philosophies may emphasize either punishment or custody or treatment. A similar diversity of philosophy exists from one institution to another.
- 2 The confusion as to what actually constitutes training.
- 3 The lack of a clear understanding of the goals of training.
- 4 The absence of clearly identifiable techniques for training a staff which includes persons with a wide variety of background and

capabilities ranging from relatively uneducated to well trained professional workers.

The discussion of these obstacles led to consideration of the personnel to be trained, and what they are to be trained for. This, in turn, led to an attempt to identify the function of the institution for delinquent children. The group agreed that "the institution seeks to provide the individual youth an experience which will enable him to develop new personal, social, academic, and vocational skills, and that as a result of his experience in the institution a growth process will be initiated which will carry over into his life in the normal community. These skills must comprise a general new ability to relate constructively within the community; they should not be just the learning of the tricks of conformity. The institutional experience should result in a basic modification of attitudes."

The means of achieving this readjustment and growth are still open to discussion. However, the group could agree that the institution must provide both an educational and a therapeutic experience for these youth. They also agreed that all staff members as well as influential State officials have some effect on this educational and treatment process. It follows, therefore, that any training program designed to increase the effectiveness of staff efforts must reach all staff members in some degree, as well as those officials whose actions and decisions affect the institution. The area that is thus opened for training programs is vast.

### *How to meet the needs*

In considering this widening area of staff training, it seemed appropriate to examine the scope and goals of current staff training programs. The literature that is available on this subject presents quite different types of programs, each based on a different set of assumptions about who should be trained for what. At the original meeting of the advisory group five different training programs were presented by the people responsible for them to give the group an idea of training as it exists today. These presentations clearly illustrated the fact that training means different things to different people. The first program presented was designed for employees in State institutions where various levels of staff from different institutions are brought together in training conferences. The emphasis was on management training. The second program, for personnel in several institutions in one State, covered primarily clinical training taught by the professional staff members to the staff members responsible for the care of children. The third was largely a program for advancement of individual staff members with promotion, based on formal tests, as the goal. The fourth program described staff development procedures geared toward the personal and emotional development of the individual worker. Finally, the fifth described a team approach to training that essentially sought to modify the institutional structure.

It was apparent that each of these programs was based on certain underlying assumptions that pointed toward particular and different goals. It seemed fruitless to argue the merits of each philosophy or to attempt to reconcile them. The group decided, instead, to clear away preconceptions in the field of training, and to start anew to define the role, the processes, and the goals of training.

This seemed like a formidable task. Therefore, the group decided that a workshop for institutional training personnel should be designed to bring together training personnel from a number of institutions to carry on and extend the consideration of the basic issues that the advisory group had identified. These issues were:

- "1 Definition of goals of the institution with special reference to educational and therapeutic goals.
- "2 Location of various responsibilities for training within the institutional structure.
- "3 Restatement of the goals of a training program within the institution.
- "4 The relationships between the use of a communication system for control by the superintendent and its use for training.
- "5 The problems of evaluation of training programs.
- "6 The reevaluation of training techniques in the light of training goals.
- "7 The problem of scheduling time for training."

The plans for the Workshop were implemented by a grant from the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. The Children's Bureau and Rutgers University, where the Workshop would be conducted, accepted responsibility for the organization of the project. Three other organizations, the Council on Social Work Education, the National Association of Training Schools and Juvenile Agencies, and the National Probation and Parole Association, agreed to act as sponsors.

In order to select the Workshop participants, it was planned to find the workers with responsibility for in-service training in institutions for delinquent children who could bring keen, inquiring, creative minds to the consideration of this task; who could slough off old established routines and were capable of changing their minds; who were young enough to have the larger part of their careers and contribution to the field substantially ahead of them. To find these people, nominations were solicited from a number of different sources, including superintendents of training schools for juvenile delinquents, parent agencies for such institutions, schools of social work that have some special connection with personnel in the field,

regional staff members of such agencies as the Children's Bureau and the National Probation and Parole Association, and various people in the field known to members of the advisory group and the staff.

A total of 186 nominations were made and of the persons nominated 137 applied for the Workshop. In examining these applications it became obvious that training responsibility resided in a variety of positions, that a number of different professional backgrounds were represented by the people applying. The common bond was that each faced a number of difficult problems on his job.

The selection committee representing Rutgers University, the Children's Bureau, and the National Association of Training Schools and Juvenile Agencies was faced with the difficult task of selecting 24 of these for the Workshop. Many able and talented people were unfortunately eliminated. The 24 people chosen included 4 superintendents, 3 assistant superintendents, 5 directors of cottage life, 3 directors of social service, 3 chief psychologists, 1 educational director, 3 persons from the staff administrative or consultative level, 1 director from a demonstration project for staff training, and 1 faculty member from a school of social work. They represented 4 different areas of professional preparation. Fourteen had backgrounds in social work and 10 in psychology, sociology, or education. Two had no formal professional educational background but long and varied institutional experience. Several had more than one discipline in their educational background. They came from 17 different States.

There was, obviously, considerable variation in functional position of the different participants, in professional training and even in the geographic area in which they worked. One of the jobs of this Workshop was the establishment of a frame of reference that would be meaningful to all the personnel engaged in training in these institutions. To accomplish this, leaders were sought for the Workshop who represented these various disciplines. The six leaders chosen did represent a variety of disciplines, including one each from psychiatry, sociology, social casework, social group work, clinical psychology, and group dynamics. In addition each had had experience in training institutional workers.

The leaders were seen in the project plan as the core group who, with the help of the participants, would work on the problems of staff training. They would be responsible for selecting the key problems from the welter of questions it was anticipated the participants would pose; for focusing the discussions and for preparing the summary of accomplishments. They would be assisted by two consultants with broad experience in training schools.

### *Selecting a focus for the Workshop*

From the applications submitted to the project it became clear that training personnel are concerned about two key problems. Nearly every application mentioned, in one form or another, difficulty in the relationship



between treatment and custody staff, sometimes described as the problem of getting custody staff treatment oriented. Institution after institution reported that they were in the position of having recently accepted treatment goals, only to find that their staff as now constituted could not implement such goals. As the goals of the Workshop were discussed, these problems loomed large. Four points were made clear in the discussion of the advisory group which helped to limit the goals of the Workshop to obtainable ends. These were:

“1 The increasing demand by society that the delinquent children and youth who are released from institutions should come back into the community more able to participate positively in community life is the force which is thrusting institutions into the position of reorganizing to provide treatment as well as custody. Many institutions have responded to these demands, that they treat as well as hold, by attempting to set up treatment programs. Since few institutions are given the resources to accomplish this double goal, and since there are many conflicting ideas about how such goals are to be achieved, these institutions are faced with extremely difficult organizational problems involving internal conflict and heart-breaking struggle. Training of staff is seen as one of the key methods by which an institution modifies its program in the direction of treatment. All the participants in the project come from institutions which have accepted in some form the social demand that they treat as well as hold. Therefore, the Workshop will be focused on helping personnel from institutions which are now engaged in an effort to organize for treatment consider how to use training programs to facilitate institutional development in the direction of treatment goals. The written material available from the Workshop will be accessible to other institutions as they, too, respond to social pressures to develop treatment programs.

“2 The great diversity between institutions in philosophy, methods used to achieve goals, and resources for accomplishing goals, was noted. This diversity is further complicated by similar diversity between different groups of staff within each institution. Therefore, it is clear that the Workshop should not attempt to describe an ‘ideal’ training program. Rather, it should be focused on the process by which any institution might undertake to use training as a means for facilitating institutional change toward more efficient organization to achieve the goals of treatment as well as custody. This will involve developing a strategy of analysis and a strategy of beginning to act which can be used by a training person wherever he is employed.

- “3 Participants in the Workshop are all persons who have been assigned some training responsibilities in their actual situations. Most of them also have other functional assignments. Therefore, the focus of the Workshop should be on the roles, activity, and range of problems found by the staff member who is responsible in some way for staff training.
- “4 The participants in the Workshop have not been asked to come as ‘students’ and the leaders have not been asked to ‘teach.’ Rather, the Workshop is set up to bring together a group of persons who will work together to produce the formulation on staff training which will be useful in institutions as they now exist. In this group are persons who bring resources from a variety of disciplines and bodies of knowledge—the leaders; and persons who bring resources of knowledge about the practical problems of training in institutions—the participants. The leaders are responsible for organizing a process by which a formulation will be achieved by this entire group which will be useful to the participants and which can be made available to other institutions through a publication. In the final two days of the project the leaders will work alone to summarize and refine this formulation.”

In order to focus the Workshop on practical problems, each participant was asked to submit in advance “a two-page statement \* \* \* on a key problem in training institutional staff which you would like to see discussed at the Workshop.” The leaders and the educational director convened just prior to the beginning of the Workshop to examine the 21 sample problems which were submitted. From a discussion about the expectations of the participants as revealed by these statements, it was agreed that the project could realistically hope to achieve three basic things:

- 1 A publication embodying newly defined and clear concepts of training.
- 2 The development of persons better able to lead in staff training development in their regions.
- 3 A national communication system among leaders, among participants, and among leaders and participants for ongoing work on training problems.

The Workshop sessions got underway on Sunday evening, April 7, 1957, and continued for four days. It was held in one of the dormitories at Rutgers University, which provided both living space and meeting space for the participants. It continued through April 11. The leaders, educational director, and administrative assistant met for an additional day and a half to evaluate, organize, and develop the ideas from the working sessions.



It should be noted that the total Workshop, from its inception as one way of meeting a real need in the institutional field to its conclusion in the form of this pamphlet and the educational experiences and ideas that the participants took back to their jobs, was characterized by a consideration of the practical demands and the realistic requirements of people carrying responsibility for training in the various institutions for juvenile delinquents. Although a general framework was carefully prepared during the planning sessions, the organization of the project was flexible enough to allow the participants considerable voice in determining the actual organization both of the groups and of the material considered in the groups. The expectations of the leaders and staff and of the participants were given serious consideration in determining what materials should be discussed in the work sessions. Problems were freely aired and discussed. No stringent limitations were placed on the material or on the discussion by the staff or leaders. Rather, limitations were placed by the participants themselves as they recognized the general problems that they faced and saw what they might realistically expect to accomplish during the project.

## II THE PROCESS

With this background of planning 3 groups of 11 persons each sat down to consider together the problems of staff training in institutions for juvenile delinquents. Each group included eight participants, every one of whom had some sort of staff training responsibility in an institution for juvenile delinquents; two leaders, one bringing knowledge from a discipline related to groups and social structure, the other with special knowledge in a discipline related to individuals and psychological realities; and one staff member from the Project. As far as possible each of these groups was a small version of the Workshop as a whole, including persons from a variety of functional positions in institutions, from various academic backgrounds, and from each functional group in the Workshop.

### *The raw data*

These persons had studied, before they met, the 21 anonymous "vignettes" or short case presentations of training problems in institutions for juvenile delinquents which the participants had contributed. Each of the 21 vignettes presented a situation in which various types of staff and the children in their care were seen to be adversely affected by a range of problems for which staff training might offer some help. A quick glance through these statements revealed that training programs were expected to do something about any or all of the following:

Poor communication between cottage personnel and professional staff, between the personnel of one cottage and another, between administration and any other group of staff.

Entrenched attitudes toward children which interfered with treatment purposes.

Educational lacks in the background of personnel employed without specific qualifications.

Orientation of persons with professional education who had no knowledge of institutional work or of the problems of delinquents.

The emotional rigidities and disturbances of individual staff members.

Preparation of staff for promotion.

Small hostile cliques which were unable to cooperate with other groups of staff.

The inadequacies or resistances of various staff in relation to the daily routines for which they were responsible.

Disagreements among staff as to the goals, philosophy, and purposes of institutional treatment.

Generalized resistance to change in general and to training as an instrument for change.

At the same time that training programs were expected to do something about all these problems, the person with training responsibility often found that his resources for establishing training were inadequate. For instance:

It was difficult to arrange staff time for training.

Administration might not be completely "sold" on the value of training to the accomplishment of the institution's task.

Responsibility for organizing training might not be clearly assigned to one staff member, or was assigned to a person who already had more than a full-time assignment.

There was disagreement among various groups of staff as to what training should try to accomplish.

There were few persons in the institution or in the surrounding community who could be asked to lead staff training.

Parent agencies in the State and influential groups in the community might not support an investment of time and money in training programs.

There was little motivation on the part of any staff to ask for training or to invest energy in it.

These were the problems of training revealed in the raw data which the Workshop participants had provided out of their own experiences. They were the same problems which had been foreseen by the planning committee and which had been reported in the 137 applications to the Workshop. As far as could be determined they were in general the problems that any institution for juvenile delinquents might well face as it attempted to start a training program.

To show how down to earth and essentially complex these case illustrations were, one vignette which was used several times for group analysis is included here.

### *Cottage X*

"Cottage X has been in existence about eight months. The group in this cottage is not too different from that in several other cottages on the grounds. The children assigned to this group were picked from other cottages and from our reception group, to give a cross section of boys. Because of crowded conditions and lack of space, a nucleus of mature gang boys had been placed in this cottage. However, there are several other cottages which have similar population problems.

"The staff for this cottage was selected with the intention of providing a good relaxed mature team. Supervisor A had had two years experience in another institution and had done well working as a relief supervisor in various group programs about the institution. He was one of our oldest supervisors, had good control and was well liked by all the boys. Supervisor B was easygoing, relaxed and well liked by most boys. He had worked as the extra coverage supervisor in reception, where he seemed to develop good relationships with new boys. Supervisor C was a rigid demanding person. Supervisor D, relief supervisor, had much the same personality as A and B but had less experience.

"Cottage X has not seemed to function as well as we would like. There are constant problems and trouble of various sorts. The senior supervisors, who are responsible for the security, control, and functioning of the daily program, complain of spending a great portion of their time in this one cottage handling problems. We have had a great deal of talk and gripes, but very little factual information. Some of the problems are:

- "1 Staff and boys from other cottages complained that Cottage X was trying to start gang trouble. There had been some catcalling and threats between this cottage and other groups during group movements.
- "2 Several boys have complained to the seniors and to the social worker that the cottage is being run by a certain boy. However, one boy making such a complaint has had a long history of gang involvement and would like to be a leader.
- "3 There seems to be a great deal of hostility among individuals in the group. Boys complain that other boys are getting them into trouble.

"4 The group has complained that their social worker does not see them and that they are being blamed for things that they did not do. Individual boys ask to get out of the cottage.

"5 The cottage has shown up poorly upon inspection, and there seems to be a great deal of loss of clothing and equipment.

"The problems and tensions in this group continue to mount. Individually, the social worker, seniors, and director of cottage program have talked with the staff and with the boys about their cottage. No real change has been noticed and the tensions have increased. Because of these problems we have had a series of meetings with the superintendent and the social worker to discuss how we should work with this group. These discussions brought out the following factors:

"1 We seldom get reports from this cottage, good or bad, from any of the staff except when some superior presses for them. When they are required to write reports they prepare impressionistic summaries, which are critical of the boys and cast reflections on the program or on other staff.

"2 Most of the incidents and problems occur when relief staff are on duty. However, the source of the problems seem to be in the regular supervised program.

"3 There seems to be little organization for or limitations on the boys set up by the staff.

"4 There seems to be little organization or team spirit among staff members, although there is no concrete evidence of hostility among individual staff members.

"5 Each boy seems to do as he pleases so long as he does not cause trouble. There is little group spirit, and no planned program or direction being given by the regular supervisory staff.

"A variety of efforts were made to help this cottage correct its difficulties, including group meetings, individual conferences, and administrative changes in personnel. Although there was some improvement the following problems interfered with achieving marked success:

"1 Communication problems—it seems that many of the staff

that need training are unable to follow the discussions because of the professional words used by the various professional staff members. For example, the psychiatrist will mention 'id,' 'ego'; the social worker will mention 'repression' and 'pecking order'; the teacher will mention 'curriculum,' etc.

- "2 Untrained staff members tend to pick up one phrase or idea out of context and formulate a complete opinion.
- "3 The roles of workers in the various departments are unrelated to each other. For instance, some say 'it is not my job to handle instructions and discipline.'
- "4 Departmentalization and departmental rivalry are evident.
- "5 Policy such as 'all boys are to be given the opportunity to develop as individuals without feeling repressed' is put into effect in many contradictory ways."

It is evident from the raw data that the task of the Workshop as it set out to order these problems and devise a way of working at them, was much the same as that of any single training officer in an institution. Faced with such a mass of confused and confusing problems, it is not surprising that the process by which the Workshop achieved a sense of direction and a consensus on basic principles was at times fumbling and characterized by spots of frustration as well as by forward movement. But it was exactly this process of learning how to think about training problems which for both the participants and the leaders provided the essential clues to the training process in the institution.

Because of what was learned about training in the process of the Workshop itself, the way by which the problems were tackled will be presented along with the Workshop findings. Thus the reader can observe for himself the difficulties inherent in this kind of problem solving, the group actions which were helpful in this task, and the actions of groups and individuals which interfered with productive labor. Since training staff in an institution is essentially problem solving by staff groups, useful suggestions for training can be found in the process as well as in content of this group effort to formulate the rationale, goals, and essential methods of staff training out of the raw material of practical problems.

### *Phase I: Identification of training problems*

In the initial planning for the Workshop the four-day period had been organized into three phases. In Phase I the small groups were asked to identify from the vignettes and their own experiences the major problems of staff training, to make a beginning exploration of such problems, and

to propose an organization of problems which might serve as an agenda for work during Phase II.

Each group began by naming a wide variety of problems. The range was bewildering and the task of organizing them for systematic examination was challenging but somewhat overwhelming. Each group located immediately two problems which were to have special importance for the Workshop consideration. They were:

The fact that staff training tends to imply a criticism of operating personnel as "persons who need to be changed."

The fact that training goals and administrative procedures often seem to be in conflict, with resulting disservice to administration, to staff, and to children.

In this beginning phase, each group in the Workshop experienced certain common problems in achieving efficient productivity. The participants came from jobs where they were experiencing these problems daily under pressure to act in relation to them. Now they were being asked to describe these problems, first in common sense terms and then, for the purposes of the Workshop, to formulate them in a way which would make analysis possible. This intellectual task was made more difficult because each participant was accustomed to use a somewhat different language from the others for such formulations. At first they did not understand each other fully as they attempted to come to a common agreement about the nature of the problems. They noted that this problem of communication among persons using different languages to refer to the same reality appears often in training projects set up in the institutions. For instance, this problem was well illustrated in the quoted vignette.

Perhaps the participants experienced most keenly the problem of suddenly finding themselves in the role of "someone who is to be trained." In their home institutions, their invitation to be a part of the Workshop had seemed like a high status assignment. Now, suddenly, they were in groups where the high status persons appear to be the leaders who were seen as persons with special knowledge who would "teach" the participants while they appeared to be in a lower status as the "learners." To a certain extent the leaders, in their eagerness to help, played into this feeling by taking too much responsibility for the group experience, offering organizing ideas too quickly and in a way which slowed down the work of the group on its own problems.

Group members responded in different ways to the difficulties of this situation. Some were silent and reserved, perhaps waiting for the leaders to "give them the answers"; some became themselves "teachers" by reporting success experiences in their own work; some offered generally accepted principles of training such as "training should be continuous" or "training should be individualized" instead of letting principles emerge from joint exploration of problems.



Later as the groups thought about this first day they all agreed that these are typical experiences for trainers and trainees in the early stages of relationship. Learning about the training process by examining their own experiences in this training project, they realized that trainees often say to leaders by their behavior: "You are there to change me but I won't let you"; and the trainers accept this interpretation and say by their behavior: "Yes, I am here to change you." Out of such a relationship, basic resistances to learning develop in the trainees which are expressed in different ways.

As the groups attempted to organize the problems which they identified into manageable units for further work certain central concerns emerged. Each group was concerned about the goals of training and how these related to institutional goals. They noted that different values are given priority by administration, custody, and clinical personnel and this fact often interferes with the communication among them necessary for effective training. They pointed out that the administrative structure of an institution—such as how time for training is provided, how responsibilities for decisions are assigned, and the way the treatment unit is related to other departments—made a great deal of difference in how effectively training could encourage staff members to modify their behavior and attitudes. The problem of getting staff motivated to want training was explored and all sorts of resistances to the changes implied in training were identified. Every sort of communication problem among staff groups with different backgrounds and assignments was named. For all, a core problem seemed to be: How, given all of these difficulties—the honest differences among staff groups in thinking about what an institution for delinquents should do for the individual boy or girl; the imperative and deeply ingrained administrative arrangements; the comfort of traditional ways of doing things; the lack of common understanding and mutual respect between custody and treatment staff; and the sheer difficulty of finding time for training—How, in fact, *do* you design a training program in which the individual staff member will want to take responsibility for his own learning?

It was agreed by all that staff training—which inevitably implies change in staff attitudes and behavior—never happens unless the individual staff person takes this responsibility for his own learning. Examples had been plentifully offered in the discussions. One participant had mentioned a staff member who lifted certain instructions out of the context of a training session, and then when the action he took proved inappropriate retorted, "I did what the man said." Another reported a staff person saying that he had never been able to learn from the psychiatrist until the psychiatrist frankly said he did not know what should be done about a given problem situation. At this point, the problem was suddenly the responsibility of the staff member and he found he was able to use the psychiatrist's help in an attempt to examine and solve the problem.



All the problems identified by the groups in the day's work related to the following four questions:

What are the philosophy and goals of training?

Who are the persons in the training process—trainers and trainees?

What are the structural elements of the institution which affect the training process?

What is the training process and its essential strategies?

Having identified these central questions, the groups decided that they no longer wanted to outline an ideal training program, although many had started with the idea that this was what they had come to do. They agreed that clarity in regard to these issues would help each participant work out the kind of training program needed and possible in his own institution. Questions about how to set up an orientation program for new staff and how to determine content for a houseparents' course were therefore dropped by mutual agreement in favor of discussion which could lead to basic understanding of the training process.

## Planning for phase II

It had been proposed originally that on the second day of the Workshop participants and leaders would begin to work on an agenda which had emerged from the first day's identification of problems. Phase II, as it was called, might involve assignment of one set of problems to each group, with the groups reconstituted according to selection of subject matter by the participants.

As the leaders and staff went into conference to determine the plan for Phase II they had two instructions from the group. One was to organize the mass of content as they saw best in the light of material from all three groups. The other was not to break up the groups as now constituted, since improved ability to understand and work with each other was already beginning to be evident among the members of each group as a result of the first day's work.

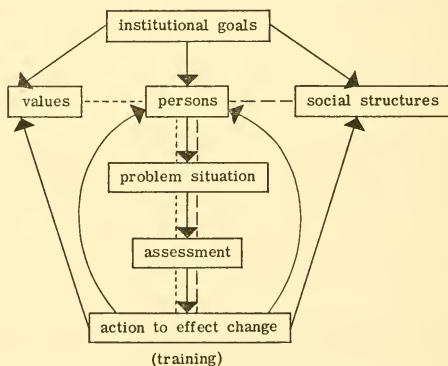
When the leaders sat down to organize the findings of the groups one of the first things they had to do was to spend some time learning to understand each other. They found they were not sure that they all meant the same thing by the term "staff development" and "staff training." Some leaders were more accustomed to think about individual needs and feelings and ways of modifying individual attitudes than about social processes and were not sure what other leaders meant by the term "structure." Above all, it was apparent that each leader had a "hidden agenda" in that he inevitably worked with his group of participants in the direction of certain ideological interests and goals peculiar to his own discipline and

preoccupations. For instance, from one group the two leaders gave quite different reports about what had happened, each in terms of his own interests. With amusement they were asked if they were sure they had been in the same room and with the same group.

It became evident that the job to be done, first for the leaders and then for the participants, was to find a way of organizing content, but not in terms of isolated problems on which persons of particular competence could work untouched by the contributions of other ways of thinking. Rather an organization of problems was needed that used all approaches, to find formulations broader and more useful than any one discipline could offer. In the light of this task it was evident that the first day's work had resulted not in identification of abstract and logically different "problems," but rather in the identification of the many dimensions inherent in "problem situations." These dimensions were in general those of: *Value and goals; persons with motivations, needs, and resistances; and social structures.* Each problem situation involved all these aspects. Accurate assessment of any problem situation, as well as action to effect change in it required this multidimensional approach.

The following scheme for examination of problem situations and the use of training to change them was devised by the leaders:

#### THE PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS IN STAFF TRAINING



It will be noted that this scheme for thinking about problem solving through staff training focuses on problem situations. Two steps are identified as required to resolve such problem situations: (1) Assessment of the problem; and (2) designing some sort of training activity to achieve change. Both steps must take into account all the elements found in each problem

situation. These elements, as identified in examination of such problem situations, seem to cluster in these general areas: the values and goals held to be important by the various staff members in the situation; the needs, motivations and resistances of the individual staff members involved; and the way these staff members are organized in the social structure. Thus the four questions proposed for discussion by the groups in their first day's work are shown to be related in each training activity. The training process (of question No. 4) becomes a way of undertaking to solve problems which are understood in terms of philosophy and goals, the persons in the training process, and the structural elements affecting both the persons and the training process.

It was agreed by leaders and staff that rather than break up the groups which had already become working units, each group would be kept together with its leaders and asked to examine the problem situations which they had already identified in the light of this scheme. The purpose in using this conceptual scheme was threefold: To provide some parallelism in the production of the three groups; to provide a means of theoretical communication among leaders; and to help the participants achieve a feeling of coherence within the vast range of material which must be discussed. The fact that the three different groups would work on the same material each according to its own pattern would insure greater richness and variety in the final formulations.

In addition to developing a conceptual scheme from the material which emerged from the work of the group, the leaders began to develop a common language for themselves. They tentatively agreed to use "staff training" to mean not "formal courses" or "everything you do that has educational effect." Rather, they agreed to mean by staff training "*structured and deliberate* efforts to use situations to effect changes in staff attitudes, orientations, and conceptions of jobs, to the end that behavior on the job will be changed." It was recognized that much training of staff goes on in every institution through regular administrative channels, as when a cottage parent takes a new relief worker through the activities of a day in the cottage, a superintendent explains policy or procedures, or a supervisor confers with a worker. Using this definition of staff training meant that the Workshop would focus on the training activities provided *in addition* to the training provided through regular interchange among staff members in the course of discharging job responsibilities.

The leaders also agreed to mean by "staff development" the *end result* of all educational processes on the job, including administrative activity and the educational effect of everyday life experiences as well as training activities.

The word "structure," they agreed, referring as it does to the arrangement of parts in relation to a whole, could be used at many different levels. Physically it might refer to the organization of an institution's campus. Psychologically it can be used in thinking about "personality structure." *Social structure* covers a range of ways in which persons are organized in

groups to perform social processes, from the formal structure revealed in the administrative chart to the more informal structure which can be observed by noticing "who talks to whom about what" in the small friendship groups among staff.

## *Phase II: The problem-solving process in training*

Phase II began with a general session of the entire Workshop in which the general findings of each group were summarized. The plan for Phase II was reported as continued work by each of the groups on the problem situations in training which they had already identified. The framework of ideas which had emerged from the first day's work was to be used by each group as a guide for assessing problems and for designing training action addressed to problem solving.

As in Phase I, each group experienced in Phase II much the same processes as did the others and came to generally similar conclusions, although in many ways their patterns of approach differed. The various patterns of work can be illustrated by the different ways the framework was used by each group.

One group asked if they had to use the scheme developed by the leaders. Upon being told this was not necessary, they plunged into detailed examination of training problems and found by the end of the third Workshop day that they were themselves identifying value elements, personal elements, and structural elements in every problem analyzed. Although they began by rejecting the scheme, they found it evolving from their own work and then accepted it as a useful way of thinking about the training process.

In another group, the use of the scheme was questioned with some feeling that it represented an effort by the Workshop administration to superimpose a predetermined answer on the group's discussions. When it became evident that most of the group felt the scheme would provide a useful framework for discussion, the scheme was used to order their analysis of problems. In this process, they revised the arrangement of its central ideas in order better to express their meanings.

In the third group there was less certainty about the meaning of the framework and its usefulness as a way of undertaking problem solving. This initial confusion was traced to a difference between the two leaders as to the usefulness of the proposal. After this was clarified by the leaders, between themselves and with the group, they turned to the study of the particular problem situations presented by members of the group, following this outline of questions: What is the present situation? What should be? How do you get there? This group also found that answering these questions led them to consider value aspects, personal aspects, and structural aspects in each problem situation.

All groups found that the effort to examine training problems in all their aspects proved unexpectedly hard exercise. Each group found for

instance that they tended to approach a problem with a limited focus on one element in the problem, picking out the rigid person in the situation, or the inflexible administrative order, or the lack of staff as the single factor which needed changing. There was also a tendency to think of a limited range of alternatives for action. It was as though the only alternatives were direct intuitive action toward a person or drastic administrative action to change the structure. These difficulties seemed to occur because of the faulty habits in problem solving which are easily acquired under the pressure of daily work. The Workshop was providing a period of freedom from pressure in which the participants could practice new problem solving processes using a broader range of elements and alternatives for action and thus achieving more flexible and useful results.

## First step: Problem assessment

As each group worked at the assessment of problems they found themselves taking a wider range of factors into account. For instance, one group explored the training problem illustrated in the vignette quoted earlier. They determined that the training goal should be to resolve the staff uncertainties revealed in this situation and to work out the differences among various groups of staff and between staff and administration. To work toward this goal they realized they would have to take into account and do something about:

**Values:** Each staff group has different values. Cottage staff valued reduction of incidents to the minimum; professional workers valued the boys' responses to treatment; administration valued uniform reporting and operation.

**Persons:** Each staff group has different fears and insecurities. For instance, cottage staff members have to deal with physical fear of what the boys might do if they got out of control. They are also insecure about revealing weaknesses to supervisors. Professional staff are insecure about their responsibility for "treatment" from a position with limited access to boys and to administration. Administration fears the effect on the whole institution of a "trouble spot" cottage. Each staff group also has traditional ways of acting with corresponding resistances to change.

**Social structure:** But these individuals do not act this way simply out of individual motivations. Each of them experiences pressure from fellow members on the staff—"reference groups"—who expect them to hold these values and to resist change. The communication system set up by administration (i. e., the reporting system) is apparently inadequate to establish better under-

standing among staff. Departments in the institution apparently operate independently of each other.

It was evident from this analysis that if training was to affect problems with such multiple dimensions it was not sufficient to set up meetings where staff are "talked at." A "canned" lecture would not suffice. Training, to effect change, would have to establish the kind of communication among staff members in which the values of each would be understood, shared and modified, fears and insecurities would be relieved, and jobs would be reexamined and reformulated in their relationships to each other.

A second group undertook to analyze the communication problem between clinical personnel\* and cottage workers with special attention to the role of the clinicians. They found themselves identifying all kinds of factors which contribute to this problem. They started by thinking of staff training as a device to provide a channel of communication between the worker and the clinician so that each could share his knowledge and skill with the other. A summary of this discussion reports:

"The concept of training as a mechanism for this kind of communication leads to distinctions between the clinician and the worker as to their respective ways of learning and teaching. The group felt that the clinician through his experience tends to learn and to pass on his knowledge by verbalizing situations and experiences. In contrast to this, the worker learns and teaches by doing. The group saw possibilities for conflict and inability to share in the fact that the professional seldom has the same kind and order of experience that the worker has. The worker thus gets to know different things than the professional does but has trouble passing this knowledge on. The suggestion was made that before the clinician-talkers came onto the scene, the worker-doers had had their own patterns of training which involved learning by doing—a kind of on the job, on the spot, teaching. Over the years this accumulated for the workers an un verbalized but well understood body of knowledge and skills derived out of meeting institutional problems directly. This resulted in a fairly clear understanding of the effects of this kind of activity. Thus the workers not only had a body of knowledge about 'how to do it,' but some ideas about what happens when you do different things to different persons under your care. The group felt that in the current separation of roles of clinician and worker there has been little opportunity for the workers to pass on this body of experience.

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\*The terms "clinical personnel" and "clinician" refer to members of various professions who are employed by institutions to provide diagnostic and treatment services, such as: psychiatrists, social workers, psychologists, group therapists, etc.



"The group at this point sought to analyze various aspects of the clinician's role. The most important aspect which they immediately identified was that the clinician tends to be assigned the role of the 'changer' while the worker gets assigned the role of the 'to be changed.' Inherent in this structure of related roles of the clinician and the worker are implications for attitudes that the worker and the clinician assume toward one another. The group felt that the worker tends to look toward the clinician as changer by saying, 'You know it all and I am inadequate.' The clinician takes on this kind of role and says, 'Yes, I know it all and you are inadequate.' There is in this relationship a very clear implication of criticism of the worker by the clinician and implications of inadequacy on the part of the worker.

"The group quickly moved to trying to define what supported these barriers of communication between the worker and the clinician. There follows a brief listing of some of the features of the institutional situation which appear to support these mutual role expectations of 'changer' and 'to be changed';

- "1 This structuring of roles between the educated and less well educated is somewhat general in our society. However, this structure of role relationships tends to get intensified inside the institution and creates special kinds of conflicts.
- "2 There is a steady and consistent pressure from the various professional groups in the larger society to assign the role of 'changer' to the clinician in correctional institutions. The administrative and professional reference groups to which the clinician looks for reward and support think of him as the changer in a missionary role. The modern philosophy of correction which is held by national organizations tends to undervalue the knowledge and contribution which may arise from the worker's experience in contrast to that which can be given by the clinician. The point is that in the larger society, as well as in the smaller professional and occupational society in which the clinician moves, there are pressures on him to assume the changer role.
- "3 By background and training the clinician is disposed to rely more on understanding and other kinds of skills than on the direct tools of control which tend to be the equipment of the correctional worker. The worker, therefore, perceives the clinician as taking away basic equipment that he requires in order to maintain authority over his work situation and to do his job effectively.

- "4 In correctional institutions there are many more workers than clinicians. Clinicians share a common body of experience and background, as well as a common language and a common understanding about how to attack institutional problems and how to look at and deal with delinquent offenders. The effect of this situation is that they tend to cluster and unite as a group, opposing their community of interests to those of the workers who surround them. This situation tends to perpetuate and intensify in each group a sense of apartness from the other group.
- "5 The clinician and the worker tend to operate from different perspectives. The cottage parent is concerned with the behavior which the children display in a direct and immediate way as it affects his job. The clinician tends to look behind the behavior for the special kinds of meanings which it symbolizes and communicates. There is a clear tendency therefore to look at the same behavior from different perspectives. This makes it difficult to communicate what is seen.
- "6 The clinician experiences a considerable amount of role confusion because he has many skills but no clear understanding as to which skills are appropriate for use in the institutional situation.
- "7 There tends to grow up in institutions a specialization of roles for the clinician and the worker. Responsibility and authority are distributed differently to each role. The clinician is given the authority to tell how things should be done but is not held accountable for what is done. The worker, on the other hand, is given the responsibility for doing and is held accountable for the results. This different assignment of responsibility, which is very common in institutional situations, creates the conditions for further conflict.
- "8 Finally, the group showed considerable interest in the tendency in most institutions to reserve career opportunities at higher echelons for those with specialized professional knowledge. The high status jobs in the profession, in other words, tend increasingly to be reserved for those who have clinical as opposed to worker knowledge of institutional life and operations.

"The group decided that all these different factors affect communication between workers and treatment personnel



and must be taken into account in designing any training project intended to improve understanding between them."

In the process of assessing problem situations, a common finding of the Workshop groups was that full analysis of any training problem led them to take into account the pressure on the institution of community values and expectations and the effect of such pressure on what can be done in training. For instance, one group found themselves moving from an exploration of the attitudes which training seeks to change to a recognition of the influence of the community in maintaining such attitudes in the staff.

"The group discussed training as an opportunity for changing attitudes in workers and of the kinds of attitudes which might need changing. In an effort to grapple with this, they gave as an example of an attitude to be changed that of the cottage parent who demands rigid adherence to a mealtime regulation that all kids be on time. This concrete example did not bring the group closer to planning the process for achieving change. What it did do was to help the group realize that this manifestation of an attitude that demands conformity was not that of a single individual with his particular group of children. They began to realize that this attitude was supported by the attitudes of other cottage parents and their methods of dealing with groups. It was also affected by the extent to which this attitude was accepted and fostered by supervisory and administrative practices. The group enlarged upon this to realize that administrative support of this kind of practice had its ramifications in pressures from the community which demands a maintenance of status quo. The basic point of agreement seemed to be that change of attitude in a single staff member cannot be understood without a consideration of the many patterns of influence and interaction that exist in the total framework of the institution and in its relationship to the community."

Thus, at every turn the groups found that even minor problems in relation to individual staff members had significant ramifications in the social structure of the institution and in the wider community as it impinges on the institution.

In assessing the problems, each group found themselves initially looking at all the things that were wrong. The next step seemed to be to look for the positives—the strengths which can be called on to mobilize change. This in turn led to discussion of specific proposals for training programs which would modify the analyzed problem situations. At this point each group decided not to spend time on outlining the formal content and techniques of staff training. Rather they agreed to work out a staff training process which could be patterned according to the needs of each

institution and which would be designed by each institution according to the problems which it identified and tried to solve.

There was general agreement that the assessment of problems is itself a major part of the training process. A summary from one group reports:

"Early in the session the question was asked whether problem assessment with its analysis of elements and projection of solutions is a process preliminary to the training itself. In answer to this question, the group clearly concluded that staff training is itself a process of solving problems. The identification, assessment and analysis of problems is part of the training process and in the jointly shared task of examining problems the basic work of training gets done. Thus the group clearly reacted against any artificial separation of the task of assessment from the process of implementing a solution to an institutional problem. They saw both of these things as a unified part of the total training task. Where communication needs exist the problem assessment process of the training program more often than not provides an answer to the needs which are being expressed, by itself opening new opportunities for communication."

## Second step: Training as a program of action to achieve change

Following consideration of the assessment of problems as a part of training, each group gave consideration to training as action to achieve change. They considered, for instance, the characteristics of a training program which would foster problem solving on the job. One group "free associated" as follows:

"If you want a group to arrive at a goal you have to let it unfold, using your position in an unobtrusive way. As soon as you look down and decide where the group should go you stop the process. Lectures will tell them what to do but won't get them reorganized.

"Learning is most productive when people feel they have a stake—they have a say.

"The deadly feeling that you are being asked to participate in something that is all set.

"When we are trying to bring about change we don't thrust it on people. We give them time to get used to the idea.

"It takes time to get ready to change.

"Even factors like scheduling have all the psychological consequences of large scale problems."

Moving from particular problems which had been analyzed on the first day of Phase II, several groups discussed how they would design specific training projects to meet such problems.

The group that analyzed the quoted vignette decided that a training project to affect that problem situation would require work in several areas.

"The group then proceeded directly to consider the processes by which a staff development program might address itself to this specific problem situation. Agreeing that a climate of administrative support was necessary and that a favorable administrative attitude toward staff development was essential in the establishment of such a climate, the training device of staff conferences was discussed in at least three aspects: (a) As fostering regularly scheduled associations among staff; (b) as a means for focusing the needs of all staff for mutual consideration; (c) as helps to staff in handling problems and understanding them.

"A possible agenda for staff conferences which would provide these experiences was next discussed in considerable detail by the group. The following points were brought out as essential agenda items:

- "1 Behavior problems and methods of handling them.
- "2 Importance of consistency in staff attitudes and management.
- "3 The principles and practices of effective group management.
- "4 Definitions of staff roles (e. g., What is our job? How is this related to the social structure, to the philosophy of the institution, and to the needs of both client and staff groups in the institution?).

"The following probable agenda items were also discussed in detail:

- "1 The dynamics of the treatment relationship.
- "2 The personal needs of staff, in terms of insight into their own problems, the use and abuse of power, and their own needs for satisfaction.

"The methodology of executing this agenda was discussed in several aspects. It was emphasized that the material listed must be handled in a group-participation manner, rather than by direct

lecturing. There was also some feeling that the handling of such topics as the personal needs of staff required delicacy and appreciation for staff readiness to look at such problems. Many of these agenda items might be reached through the examination of policies and rules of cottages by the cottage staff."

Another example of the attempts to design training action is seen in the work of the group that had analyzed the problem of communication between clinicians and cottage workers. They went on to plan a training situation which might solve some of the communication problems which they had identified.

"At the opening of the afternoon session the discussion was focused on how to train caseworkers or clinicians in order to effect the understanding necessary for sharing knowledge and perceptions of problems with cottage parents.

"It was suggested that the most effective way for the caseworker or clinician to acquire a basis for understanding the cottage parent's problems was actually to work in a cottage for a period of time, either running the cottage or working as an assistant to the person who did. It was felt that this would be an experience in learning-by-doing in the routine everyday living situation of cottage life. The group considered the consequences which might follow from this kind of learning experience. They saw these consequences as follows:

"1 The experience would enable the clinician to learn to draw information from observations of children in the group life situations of the cottage. It was felt that these observation skills which involve looking at and watching the child interact in the normal everyday routines of cottage life represented a somewhat different order of skills than the clinician is accustomed to employ in the typical clinical situation. These skills would then permit the clinician to appreciate more fully the value of cottage parents as sources for diagnostic information and reports on behavior. The clinician might then use such information to achieve more effective treatment in his own relationship with the children.

"2 The cottage experience would make it possible for the clinician to put into words the knowledge and skills which the cottage parent learns by doing but finds difficulty in describing verbally.\* The net effect of this would be to

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\*Putting concrete experiences into terms which make further intellectual generalization possible is the process known as "conceptualizing." This is an important contribution which the professionally trained person can make to improving work with delinquents in institutions.

promote greater communication between the clinician and the cottage parent because both would understand the units of experience to which the words refer. Through this conceptualization of the experience, the clinician aids the institutional program by validating the understandings which the cottage parent feels but is less able to articulate.

- "3 The group discovered at this point that they had reversed the usual approach to training and were spending their time talking about how to train the clinicians in relation to skills, knowledge, understanding and problems of the cottage parent or other worker in the institution. This sort of training was discussed as a learning experience for the clinician which would provide some common basis for communication. The group seemed to be saying that the responsibility for understanding both worlds is better lodged with the clinician than the worker because of his special discipline in the area of concepts.

"The group reacted to what seemed to be a heavily weighted, one-sided approach to learning, by pointing out that the workers could also learn more about the knowledge and skills of the clinician. Such learning might be achieved by having cottage parents, etc., participate in treatment planning conferences for youngsters.

"The purpose of such conferences would be to integrate the knowledge and skills of both the clinicians and the workers with the recognition that each had something to contribute and that each can learn from the other. At the same time that the worker learns something of the skills of the clinician he also has an opportunity to clarify his feelings and emotional reactions to the behavior of the children for whom the treatment is planned."

### *General agreements about training as a problem solving process*

As the groups continued to work on how training can be used as a problem solving process in helping institutional staff move toward treatment goals, several core ideas emerged. These were:

- 1 Attitudes of staff members are the result not only of personality organization and values but also of the many personal and social pressures which impinge on them from the institution as a whole and from the surrounding community. Therefore training, both in assessment of problems and in designing projects, must take these factors into account.

- 2 Staff training is focused on job problems. Training should be provided wherever in the institution discomfort is experienced by staff about such problems.
- 3 Staff training is not "just good administration." It is a process which supplements and supports administrative action toward change.
- 4 The basic process of staff training is provision of new communication channels through which staff can work together on their own problems.
- 5 The needs of all staff—administrative, clinical, and line staff—need attention in the problem solving process provided by training.

Elaboration of these points can be found in the discussions of the groups.

- 1 *Attitudes of staff members are the result not only of personality organization and values but also of the many personal and social pressures which impinge on them from the institution as a whole and from the surrounding community. Therefore training, both in assessment of problems and in designing projects, must take these factors into account.* As one group reported:

"One basic insight of the group was that in making attempts to change attitudes of staff members one very quickly had to move to an analysis not only of the individual's values and motivations but also of the factors in the social structure of the institution which lie behind and support the attitudes to be changed. This was illustrated by a group member's example of the efforts of a clinical worker to change the attitudes of a particularly rigid cottage parent by individual conference. Though in the reported example this approach was found to be successful, further exploration revealed that the change in attitude occurred not only as the result of efforts to change the individual. It also resulted from a new set of conditions which, operating within the structure of the institution, facilitated and promoted this change. Also effective in the change were new kinds of influences from the level of the State administration and evident changing attitudes in the community. Such changes in effect appeared to be necessary preconditions of reliable change in the individual worker. The group concluded that one has to create certain kinds of supporting conditions in order to achieve effective and lasting changes in attitude. These conditions include modification of value orientations throughout the institution, a structure of incentives which rewards the



desired change, and a coordination of both structural and personal pressures from inside and outside the institution which create motivations on the part of staff to change."

- 2 *Staff training is focused on job problems. Training should be initiated wherever in the institution uneasiness or friction is experienced by staff about job problems.*

"The group identified a common fallacy in institutional thinking to the effect that frictions or 'rhubarbs' between staff are usually considered to be bad or destructive and that the tendency in the institution is to repress such frictions. The group began to realize that, on the contrary, these frictions are good if they are made explicit and used as a basis for change. The feeling was that where staff are most uncomfortable with the way things are going will be the spot where there is the most promise that something constructive can be done to improve the situation. The central point here seems to be a very important one. The group is in effect saying that one of the best ways to begin a process of change is to search out those who are dissatisfied, and among these to select the points of conflict where people can be expected to be mobilized and concerned about restoring order. The group therefore came to the conclusion that points of dissatisfaction and conflict in the institution do not have to be repressed but when positively addressed, can become the focus of a constructive and progressive development in institutional life. Crisis then becomes not so much a dilemma as an opportunity.

"The group further noted that staff training is something which does not take place in one particular spot, but needs to be related to conditions surrounding the trouble spot as well as to the obvious difficulty. Another insight of the group was that frequently staff training does not begin at the point of origin of trouble, where there is perhaps the greatest resistance to change, but instead where there is the greatest potential for change. This, in specific terms, means that while the person who is sparking and promoting change may be dissatisfied with the rigidity of a cottage parent, an attempt to change the cottage parent might be the last spot where training would be applied. Instead, training would be seen as taking place in those conditions which surround this particular trouble spot and eventually influencing change in the trouble spot by strengthening positive forces toward change."

- 3 *Staff training is not "just good administration," but supplements administrative action toward change.* From other minutes:

"Repeatedly throughout the sessions of this discussion group,

the proposition has been popping up that staff training is just good administration. The report of a well defined administrative structure in one institution in which supervision takes care of all of the problems that arise in that structure, at all levels of administrative action and decision making, has focused examination of this proposition. The group today clearly reacted against this concept of staff training and defined more clearly than ever before the view of staff training which has evolved in the group discussion.

"The group agreed that administration is always training staff, in that all persons in supervisory positions have a responsibility for training those persons whom they are supervising. Since training is always a two-way process the person who is being supervised is also in turn training or educating the person in the supervisory position above him. However, there was a strong feeling gradually emerging in the group that the avenues of communication such as supervisory conferences provided by administration might not provide, no matter how logical and successful, for all the necessary growth experiences that staff persons need to maximize their potentials for doing their job. For instance, they noticed the educational value of the many natural spontaneous groupings which occur in any institution, in which people seek out others with whom they can discuss and share their feelings and points of view. In these natural groupings security and support is provided while ideas and values are shared and modified in the sharing.

"The idea emerged that these natural groupings may themselves be used as basic units for training, by providing them with formalized structure in the training program. That is to say, such natural groupings of staff can be facilitated and promoted so that they better fulfill the functions of providing security and modifying attitudes. The group was clearly aware that left alone these natural groupings of staff can often be characterized as 'huddling together for warmth' and may develop as tension and trouble spots with destructive effects on other groupings of staff. In line with the thinking in previous sessions, however, such trouble spots need not be squashed because of their potential destructiveness to others but can be made use of for the constructive aspects that are inherent in these groupings. The search for security represented in these groupings can be acknowledged. With help they can eventually promote security in others rather than create insecurity for them."

- 4 *The basic process of staff training is the provision of new communication channels by which staff can work together on their own problems.*



"The group identified the basic element of the training function as one which carries authority to establish new lines of communication that cut across the normal channels established in the institution. The new channels seek to provide support and a more formal context for successful informal communications currently going on in the institution as members search out ways of meeting their needs by informal contact with one another. The idea was clearly expressed that the routine group meetings which presently take place in the institution may be seen as groups which have in the past managed to solve problems successfully. In this perspective the current structure of the institution may be perceived as a crystallized organization of past successful functioning in problem solving. The trainer's task in considerable part is to initiate new problem solving groups which the current communication system does not formally provide for.

"The new problem solving communication system established by training is effective only as it provides for a certain kind of communication. Although the training task will probably be located in a single person who has this as his sole or major function, effective communication requires that training also become in some measure an aspect of everyone's task in the institution. Through these new channels of communication each person becomes eventually both trainee and also his own trainer. That is, all staff in the institution should have a stake in responsibility for their own development, and training is accomplished only when this responsibility for training is recognized and accepted by each staff member.

"A corollary idea here is that the new communication system provided in training makes it possible for staff to train themselves in that each one learns how to solve daily work problems better. The analogy was made to psychotherapy where the psychotherapist does not perform therapy on the patient but helps the patient to become his own therapist.

"This thought led each participant as a training person in an institution to examine within himself the extent to which he found himself able to think of staff training in terms of the needs of the trainees. From sharing these concerns came the realization that the expectations of the trainer must fit in with and be related to the needs and expectations of the trainee. Group members began to realize that training is not a huge burden carried on the shoulders of the 'trainer' but rather a process which can work only as others become involved in it and share responsibility for it. The question, 'Am I up to it?' thus resolved itself into a different question, 'What is it that they want me to be up to?' The pervasive fear of staff that the trainers are going to do

something to them rather than help them to do the things they want to do for themselves must be allayed if real communication is to occur. Here, the insight was achieved that the experts are not the 'trainers' but rather all the people who are involved in the training process. This had an extremely important personal meaning to many of the participants who obviously were very much involved in reflecting upon their own needs and motives as they set out to engineer, facilitate, and promote training problems.

"With the kinds of personal insights that were flowing, the participants frequently made spontaneous use of their own experience as a group in this Workshop. They identified their feelings about the leaders and the way they had handled the leadership process in the group. They felt that at first the leaders thought of themselves as responsible for making sure that the participants did something, and in their anxiety for such accomplishment carried too much responsibility on their own shoulders. The real activity began when the leaders shared this responsibility with the group and became members of the group, all of whom were working together in this process. The participants saw that in these later sessions the leaders were rejecting the role in which they had at first been placed by their own anxieties as well as by the anxiety of the members of the group who feared that they knew nothing and someone else knew it all. A mutually responsible relationship between trainer and trainee must obtain if training is to establish among staff a communication system which is effective in changing attitudes."

- 5 *The needs of all staff—administrative, clinical, and line staff—require attention in the problem solving process provided by training.*

"The range of staff needing the help provided by training was illustrated in a problem described by one of the participants. This concerned an attempt to train a particular group of line staff whose relationships to children were considered to be nontherapeutic. The emphasis of those having responsibility was on doing something to, or for, or with, these particular staff members. The group, however, gained perspective on this problem when they realized that the behavior of the particular staff group that was supposed to be changed was actually a response to a variety of other social interactions among administrative staff members. The real problem lay within the administrative grouping, which in a sense promoted and even stimulated the difficulty in the line staff on which the original

emphasis had been put. Thus it was seen that instituting formal staff training for some particular group of staff may be an escape from very serious conflicts in other aspects of the structure of the institutional setting rather than an effective training device. Thus groups of staff to whom staff training is usually directed are often really the scapegoats of other people's problems. A given staff training project may actually serve primarily as a way of distracting or displacing attention from the crux of the trouble.

"A keen sensitivity is developing in the group around two basic questions. 'Who is it who is stimulating or proposing staff training?' and 'Why is this being done?' These questions must be raised and answered to understand any particular training problem and to design effective training programs to deal with the problem."

### *Phase III: Summary and application to the training problems of the participants*

It is interesting to note that in the preliminary planning regular general sessions of the Workshop had been scheduled. However, the participants and leaders found the work in small groups so productive that at their request general sessions were canceled except for a final meeting. Because of the satisfaction and strong group cohesiveness developed in the small group process each group began to speak of itself as "the best group."

The last day of the Workshop was used by each group as a sort of "clinic for training problems" for the participant members. Each participant expressed a sense of change in his own perspectives and attitudes in relation to staff training. Each one realized that he was about to return to an institution which had shared with him his earlier ideas about staff training and which had definite expectations as to what he might bring back from a Workshop on training. Each participant therefore sought the help of his group on what he might do to implement his new ideas in the reality of his own institutional assignment.

The concrete problems described were tough ones and some were potentially frustrating. But by now the group members were accustomed to learning from each other. Each participant felt secure in getting the group's help in understanding how his own motivations might affect his efforts. The range of perspectives identified in the intensive work of the past three days were brought to bear on the assessment of specific problem situations to be faced in the immediate future and on the kind of action which each participant might possibly undertake.

On one thing, all groups were agreed. At whatever point the trainer was placed in the administrative line, his first task was to help adminis-

tration relate training to administration needs and goals. Apparently contrary purposes between administration and clinicians, between control procedures and treatment, were just those trouble spots where the training process could help most. In the definition of training which the Workshop had developed, useful communication between staff members in relation to the needs of each staff group was the primary process. The skill of the trainer would lie in his ability to select the trouble spots where communication processes were failing and where there was a desire to change; to provide a situation in which such problems could be broken apart, examined, and reevaluated in terms of all the needs of all the staff involved; and to draw all staff into the shared responsibility for institutional change. In all of these problems administration has a primary stake and is therefore an essential member of the communication process provided in training.

At the final general session no attempt was made to summarize all the work of all the groups during the Workshop. The participants knew that their efforts to tackle the problem of staff training would contribute to the production of a pamphlet which would offer their developing ideas for consideration to all personnel in institutions for delinquent children. They knew also that the Workshop had itself been a kind of training experience which could be analyzed by themselves and others for factors which contribute to or inhibit learning. In the experience of the Workshop itself the participants, the leaders, and the staff had all learned much about how to structure training experiences for problem solving, and how communication with others with different backgrounds, experiences, and functional positions could widen perspectives and change attitudes.

At the end there was some talk of how participants might communicate further with each other. Certain participants had begun to talk informally with others in the same geographical area about the possibility of following this Workshop with a similar project for their region. But the chief concern of each participant was the year ahead when he would be testing his new ideas and attitudes in the hard tasks of everyday work. The Workshop had been a good experience for all; its ultimate test, however, would inevitably be "Does this help me work differently on the job?"

### III THE FINDINGS

After the Workshop disbanded, the leaders remained for a day and a half (five sessions) to consider the material contributed by the participants. Their instructions were to discuss the ideas emerging from the Workshop in whatever way seemed most valuable to them. Two staff members remained with the leaders to keep track of the discussion. The task of organizing the material from the Workshop and from the leaders' meetings into a publication would then be a later responsibility of the staff.

From the beginning of this attempt to order and develop the Workshop findings, the leaders discovered that they could use the Workshop itself as a laboratory experience in the learning process. Having shared in this experience they found that joint examination of its content and process from the viewpoints of the various disciplines they represented resulted in much richer and more meaningful formulations than they could have achieved individually. Use of the Workshop as a laboratory experience in learning also made it possible for them to utilize in their formulations the Workshop process as well as the rich contributions of illustrative material made by the participants in the small group discussions.

The leaders noted that while in many ways the Workshop could be considered representative of training processes in an institution there were also some differences to be kept in mind.

The Workshop was like staff training in an institution in that it brought together persons with a variety of functions and from different backgrounds to work at problems which were common to them all. The Workshop, also like the training program in the institution, relied on consideration of problems rather than on administrative action to produce change. On the other hand the Workshop differed from training in the institution in that the persons "in training" were not already related by a history of working together nor did they go back to work with each other in the future. Although all training processes have some of the quality of freeing the participants temporarily from the usual patterns of work relationships, the Workshop participants had two added freedoms not usually available in institutional training programs, those of geographic removal from the institution and removal from patterned relationships with persons with whom the daily job is performed. These additional freedoms may or may not have added to the intensity of the learning experience in the Workshop.

## *The dynamics of staff training*

Reminding themselves to note these and other differences as they affected generalizations about the training process, the leaders addressed themselves to the nature of staff training in institutions. The following propositions seemed to them to have been central to the formulations about staff training made by the three groups in the Workshop.

- 1 *Staff training is focused on live issues of concern to persons on jobs.* Staff training in this perspective is one of the methods available to institutions for providing the staff with an opportunity to consider problems experienced on the job. This sort of training would always be directed to problems actually perceived as problems by the persons to be trained, rather than to problems perceived about staff by others who want them trained. It is a mechanism for involving persons on the job in thinking through aspects of their job where they feel discomfort. If problem-solving is the heart of the staff training process, there are important implications for how staff are to be grouped in training programs and for the selection of problems to be undertaken in training.
- 2 *Staff training relies on the energy developed in conflict situations and on the desire to modify such situations for the motivation to learn and to change.* Over and over again the Workshop participants had identified the fear of "being done something to by the other" as the primary resistance to learning. They found this resistance in themselves in the Workshop and in the staff members presented in the vignettes. Crystallized resistance to training in institutions seems to grow out of a misconception of training as change foisted upon the "doer" by the "knower."

In order to avoid this resistance and to tap motivations for learning, training must involve each staff member in doing something himself with his fellows about problems which cause him discomfort. Therefore, the stress situations which are approached in training can be relied upon to provide the energy for learning. This kind of staff training is a process designed to make it safe for staff to recognize disharmony openly and to use such recognition productively.

In this kind of training program every staff member has a place. Each staff member, administrative and clinical as well as others, has problems pertinent to his job which can be resolved through the kind of discussion with his co-workers which can be provided in the training program.



- 3 *Staff training programs will vary from institution to institution depending on the nature of the problems selected for examination, and the groups of staff most ready to use training for learning and change.* Approaching training from this point of view means that no outline for training can be merely superimposed on one institution out of the experience of another. Yet because of the nature of the task of working with delinquent children in institutions and because of the similarity of organizations of human beings to do this task, the process and content of training in institutions will probably be similar from one institution to another. But, just as in the three groups in the Workshop where process and intellectual outcomes were similar while the pattern of development differed, so among institutions, the training program in each institution will take on a characteristic form related to the specific needs and potentialities of that institution.

Training as a problem-solving process can probably be started at any point where a group of staff members feel uncomfortable about their jobs. From this point, relationships to other staff will inevitably be identified as involving problems both for the original group and for other staff groups. The training process does not begin and end. It is a continuous, growing way of working toward the accomplishment of institutional goals which brings all staff, as they can be involved, into the problem-solving process.

From such a proposition it would follow that an institution would not evaluate its training program by asking such questions as "Do we have a course for cottage parents like the one in institution X?" or "Do we have the orientation program recommended by consultant Y?" or "Is a psychiatrist teaching our staff about the common disturbed behavior syndromes?" Rather, the key evaluative question would be: "Are we providing through our training programs a flexible, responsive medium by which all staff are able to consider with their appropriate fellows the problems which interfere in the accomplishment of their jobs?"

### *The strategies of training: What issues? What groups?*

Having accepted these propositions as the key formulations developed by the staff trainers who were the participants in the Workshop, the leaders went on to ask what such an approach to training might mean for the selection of problems to be considered in training and for the selection of staff groups with whom to begin training. In order to examine this question they turned to a consideration of how the selection and structuring of the small groups in the Workshop had affected learning.



Particularly noteworthy was the high degree of group cohesiveness and loyalty which developed in each small group as a result of the structure of the Workshop. Each group was somewhat competitive with the others in the value it placed on "becoming a group." This high valuation of the experience of being a group put some pressure on the leaders to give the group a sense of being the "best," both in cohesiveness and in productivity of ideas.

In the Workshop there was no great need to achieve loyalty to the Workshop itself, and small group loyalty was no problem so long as group productivity was of a high order. But in the institution the situation is different. It is important in the institution that a small staff group with intense inner loyalties not crystallize into a group with limited loyalty to the total institution and with barriers to communication with other staff groups.

On the other hand, small group loyalty, such as occurred in the Workshop, seems important for learning. Arising, as it does, from a rich experience in communication among group members, it seems to be a precondition for learning in staff training. It provides security for the individual member so he can examine material that is meaningful to him with his fellows without defensiveness. It stimulates learning at the "feeling" level as well as at the intellectual level and thus supports attitude change. And it gives members in the small group the sense of group status and competence which is necessary for readiness to work with other groups.

Given the fact that structuring small groups for problem-solving does result, when successful, in strong group cohesiveness, how do you, in institutional training programs, take advantage of this for learning and still avoid the crystallization of independent small groups within the institution? The leaders wondered if the nature of the staff unit selected for training made a difference in whether or not they crystallize into groups in which group loyalty interferes with institutional loyalty. They asked two questions:

How do you, in institutional training, select the small units with which to begin training?

How and when do you seek to move such small units toward larger identification with the whole institutional operation?

It was noted that if competitiveness between the small groups in the Workshop had become a problem in relation to productivity, this would have become a problem for the members of the groups and as such could have been taken up with them so that they could work at ways to solve it. In every institutional operation the work of each operating unit is affected by the work of other staff units, so that inevitably each such group could be expected to reach a point in its problem-solving when "understanding those others who interfere" would become the problem to be solved.

Discussion about how to select the small units with whom the training process begins focused at first on two apparently opposing ideas.

You avoid using operating teams as the small units because they so easily crystallize into institutionally isolated subgroups.

You choose to use the operating teams such as the staff of one cottage as initial units because this is the spot where communication problems are most easily identified and felt most deeply.

You move the small unit into identification with larger staff groupings as small groups recognize in their own work problems the necessity of understanding and working with "those others."

The general principles related to training which developed from this discussion are found in the minutes of the leaders' meetings:

"You always begin with actually perceived problems. Tensions reveal the foci of conflict where energies can be released for learning. The selection of particular problems to be examined in staff training depends on two factors: Genuine staff discomfort with the problem; and readiness in the staff to do something about the problem. Problem spots where the resistance to change is high can be left for later attention when work related to the trouble area has reduced some of the surrounding pressures which maintain such resistance.

"Selection of persons to be part of any training unit is determined by noting those who are related to the work problem to be examined. The *task* is the basis for forming the small unit. Informal subgroups, operating teams, and collections of individuals from many administrative units who face a common problem can all be used as units for training.

"The cohesiveness of the small group is important for learning. The small group first achieves its own identity and then becomes ready to 'take on the world.'

"Problem-solving attention can be directed to competitiveness among small units at the point that this becomes a problem recognized by group members as interfering with the achievement of group goals. Preparation within each small group is necessary in advance of structured transition to larger group activity.

"The trainer keeps both the needs of the small group and the needs of the whole institution in mind as he works with the small groups. Thus he detects readiness in the small group to expand its focus and helps its members find ways of relating their problems

and needs to the problems and needs of other groups in the institution."

## *The relation of training and administration*

Since all administrative processes are concerned with "problems on the job," it was necessary next to consider the question of the relationship of problem-solving in training to problem-solving accomplished through other administrative processes. This was recognized as a key problem in training since often training effectiveness is blocked because the relationship between training and administration has not been clarified. Then the staff may be asked in training to develop attitudes and skills which are not supported by the administrative structure of procedures, staff assignment, and decision making. Such training experiences often crystallize staff resistance around issues such as "treatment vs. custody." Training may seek to instruct staff in ways of operating which are opposed to administrative purposes or may be just another means of conveying instructions from administration. Training may be thought of as "just good administration" on the one hand or as a substitute for good administration on the other.

It became necessary therefore to clarify what characterizes the training process as different from the other problem-solving processes of administration, such as issuing an order, settling a dispute over procedures, or seeking staff advice about a decision to be made by the administration.

It seemed clear that the Workshop groups had identified two characteristics of training which differentiate the training process from other administrative ways of doing something about work problems. These were:

- 1 The creation of new communication lines between staff members which cut across formal routine channels.
- 2 The use of assessment of problems as a primary process in problem-solving. In such assessment of problems staff members gain a new perception of their roles and the roles of others. This changed perception results in changed functioning. Other administrative processes seek to achieve changed functioning by reorganizing the structural definition of roles or by changing the assignment of personnel to the roles.

It should be noted that these processes in training are not substitutes for the other, equally necessary, administrative processes. Rather they supplement and support the communication processes and actions appropriate to regular administrative relationships and responsibilities.

## *Training as a change-effecting process*

The leaders then set themselves to consider what it is about training as it had been defined up to this point, that encourages change in staff

attitudes and behavior. What factors for instance seem to stimulate and encourage learning and change? What factors seem to act as depressants to the problem-solving process? Again they referred to the Workshop as a laboratory in which a high level of learning accompanied by evident attitude change had been observed. They identified several aspects of the Workshop experience which seemed to facilitate learning. These were:

- 1 For participants, the Workshop was a "moratorium" from accustomed pressures, functioning, and authority relationships.
- 2 Learning and helping others to learn became the high status function in the Workshop.
- 3 The authority relationships between the leaders and the participants were democratized.
- 4 There was significant cross fertilization of ideas arising out of interdisciplinary conflict and contribution.
- 5 The proposed pamphlet provided a concrete symbol of a larger goal to the accomplishment of which the learning process could contribute.

It seemed evident that each of these factors may be required as a part of any staff training project which seeks to achieve a high level experience in learning and changing.

### *Training as a moratorium*

To quote from a summary of the leaders' discussion:

"An outstanding characteristic of the Workshop as a training experience was that it provided a *psychosocial moratorium* for the participants. It was noted that the group interaction itself was one of the means of achieving such a moratorium. Each person was freed from certain immediate social and psychic pressures. He experienced security because of his acceptance in the group—an acceptance which was achieved through a new kind of activity, different from that usually required of him. In a new and protected culture he was free to experiment with new roles, without punishment from reality if his experimentation proved at first awkward or unrealistic. The leaders asked: Is the degree of learning achieved related to the extent to which such a moratorium is provided? It was in general agreed that this characteristic of training—that of providing a moratorium—helps to discriminate training from other administrative processes. Probably all training provides for some temporary freedom from normal social pressures, allowing the participants to engage in learning through

problem-solving processes which are different from those found in 'learning-on-the-job.'''

One of the primary characteristics of the training "moratorium" in the institution seems to be that it provides for staff a way of relating outside the normal authority relationships in the institution. Although in regular institutional operation the supervisor makes necessary decisions which must be accepted by subordinates, in the training process the knowledge contributed by the subordinate can be as important to problem-solving as that contributed by the supervisor. Significant training probably depends in large measure on the extent to which a genuine freedom from the roles in the administrative hierarchy is achieved within the training sessions. Only in such freedom can the individual staff member experiment with ideas, break open problems in a way which reveals new elements to be considered, and think imaginatively about new solutions to work problems. Such a freedom to play with new ideas and to experience possible new attitudes can encourage the staff member to feel and think differently about his job. It is this experience of new ways of thinking and feeling which modifies his functioning on the job in institutional operation.

### *Learning as a high status activity*

One of the important aspects of such a shift of relationships is the high status which is assigned to learning in the training process. From the leaders' minutes:

"It was noted that examination of the way the 'learners' in the Workshop were brought together might throw light on the way their feelings of status affected learning. For the participants the fact of having been selected for this learning experience had implications in two status systems. On the outside they were perceived and perceived themselves as having high status because they were selected to attend. In the Workshop, however, they saw themselves in the status of 'one who is to be changed by those others.' This sense of low status in the Workshop itself produced initial anxiety and resistance to learning and intensified their tendency to want to teach other participants rather than to learn. In order to encourage learning it was necessary to modify both these status reactions.

"It was noted in this connection that each group moved more creatively after the leaders had demonstrated ability and willingness to learn from each other and from the group. This seemed to result in giving high status to the role of 'learner' in the group, by the process of associating the high status of the leader with the learning and 'helping to enjoy learning' process. Principles emerging from this discussion seemed to be:

"Resistance to learning always develops out of the perception by the learner of himself as one of low status 'to be changed' by persons of higher status.

"The leader must seek to modify this status reaction in the direction of high status assigned to learning and helping others to learn.

"The leader does this best by demonstrating by his behavior that learning from others is satisfying and of higher value than face-saving, proving himself right, etc."

### *Democratizing the authority relationships of leader and participant*

In training as in other administrative relationships there is a power structure. In training, the leader comes with two kinds of authority. One is the sanction or delegation of authority from administration which establishes his formal responsibility for training. The other source of authority is his competence or body of skill and knowledge because of which he has been asked to lead training.

However, in training there is another source of power which resides in the group itself. In training the real power of the leader is a permissive function of the group. The leader cannot make the participants learn and must rely on their willingness to learn in order to achieve his training goals. This is a new power in the hands of the group which it usually does not experience in normal operation in the institution.

Thus the leader remains the leader in actuality only if the group gives the authority of leadership to him. When it does so it is because the group has learned that the leader is competent to help with problem-solving. There is then a shift from "I am your leader by appointment from administration" to "You are our leader because you help us learn."

Quoting from the leaders' meeting:

"The factor of the authority of competence is a double edged one for the institutional trainer. On the one hand there is an institutionalized fear of professional intrusion. The trainees expect automatically that there will in actuality be no moratorium in the authority distribution and that the group will not be allowed to make decisions. Therefore the leaders have to demonstrate in their behavior that the decisions appropriate to the group—i. e., what are the important problems, how are they to be defined, what messages go from the group to administration or to other groups—will be decided by the group and honored by the leaders. The leaders then are trusted by the group—as was demonstrated in the Workshop—to represent the group in the



higher level councils concerned with the group's interests (in the Workshop these councils were the leaders' meetings). At this point leaders are no longer 'coming to us from them' but 'going to them from us.' This process is one of the important links between the training group and the formal administrative hierarchy in the institution."

### *The cross-fertilization of interdisciplinary conflict and contribution*

Each group in the Workshop was organized so that its members represented several different approaches to training problems. Not only did the leaders represent different theoretical disciplines, but the participants also came from various functional positions and educational backgrounds. This fact stimulated curiosity in each group member about "the other" and set up unresolved tension systems which had to be resolved. This is another example of how potential conflict can be used to turn energy into constructive activity.

Every institutional training project, no matter how designed, contains in the backgrounds and functional positions of the participants this potential for difference and its constructive use.

The interdisciplinary experience of the leaders in this Workshop seemed to have particular implications for designing the kind of institutional training project where resource persons from different disciplines are used in successive meetings. In this Workshop the leaders themselves found that they made much more progress toward understanding each other and therefore in being helpful to the group than in previous experiences of this kind because they had worked together within the groups and outside the groups in leaders' meetings. Actually, the leaders found that in their shared responsibility for group productivity they either learned to work together or were "hung together" through the failure of the group. As a result of this shared responsibility they were more active in learning to understand each other's frame of reference and so more helpful to the groups in achieving new formulations of ideas which reflected the cross fertilization of different disciplines.

### *A larger goal to which the training process can contribute*

In the Workshop one of the factors contributing to intensity of work on problem-solving was the fact that a publication would report the efforts of the group. Thus the work of the participants gained significance for what it would contribute to others like themselves who were struggling with similar problems. Although it is not clear how in the individual institution this relation between the contribution of the small group to a larger production can be concretized, this factor was of sufficient signifi-



cance in the Workshop for it to be noted. It suggests the possibility of using within the institution such projects as the production of a manual as the kind of ultimate goal which intensifies creative efforts at the level of the contributing group.

### *The administrative consequences of training*

In the light of the preceding discussion on the factors which facilitate learning in staff training projects, the leaders restated their definition of training as one of the processes of administration. They said:

"Training is an administrative process which is characterized by:

"Provision of a moratorium from the normal exercise of authority.

"A different use of conflicts, recognizing them in order to use the energy invested in them for learning.

"A redistribution of power, in that power in training flows up from the group rather than down from the head (as in other administrative processes which are directly addressed to discharging the mission of the institution)."

The leaders went on to examine what might be the consequences for administrative functioning in an institution which provided such a training process within its structure. To quote:

"There followed a period of discussion around the question: If training is a moratorium from the formal hierarchial exercise of authority, what are the consequences for administration and its responsibilities?

"The consequences of providing through training for regular moratoria from the normal exercise of authority would seem to be a gradual redistribution of power within the institution leading toward the creation of a genuinely democratic society. Staff members, including high administrative figures, go into the training moratorium which provides a culture in which learning is the high status process for all. In this moratorium roles are examined and perceptions of them modified, problems are assessed and seen in new perspectives, other persons are better understood and communicated with. The individual staff person returns to the unmodified structure of the administrative hierarchy, but because he perceives his own role differently he behaves differently and thus influences the structure. The end result of this process

should be a gradual modification of structure leading to a decentralization of power and a democratization of relationships throughout the institution.

"The point was made strongly that the training process should never (and, in the sense described above, can never) be used to subvert or manipulate administration. Administrators who accept this concept of training need to understand that they are supporting a process which will lead to lessening of the absoluteness of power and a redistribution of authority. However, they can be reassured that such a process, genuinely experienced, will tighten the lines of responsibility for performance rather than disintegrate them. This is because the administrator acts in the decentralized authority system by the sanction of the group and thus has the added support of voluntary rather than imposed acceptance of authority. The staff group in examining the problems faced in its work learns directly the need for tight and efficient administration in order to accomplish group goals and delegates this task to the administrator. They then submit to authority because it helps them accomplish the tasks to which they are committed rather than because it is imposed."

The leaders recognized that they had here formulated an idea which needs much more elaboration. Such elaboration, however, can be achieved only with the help of administrators who themselves report on the effects of training on administrative processes. Because of the central importance of the relationship between training and administration a next project might well bring together superintendents of institutions in order to explore these problems from the administrative point of view.

In the Workshop experience, some of the progressive democratization of authority relationships which might be expected in the institution had been observed. The leaders discussed the role of the educational director in the Workshop. She had primary responsibility for the organization of the Workshop, and for the resulting publication. In all of these responsibilities she was more remote from the participants than were the leaders. The leaders said:

"In this way she was something like a superintendent in the institution whose communication lines depend on intermediate supervisors. As the top authority she presented decisions to the participants which were rejected, modified, and reaccepted in the small groups with the help of the leaders. As the leaders represented an authority which allowed and encouraged this process, the educational director came to be perceived as an authority who also welcomed democratic attention to group needs. In the decision-making process the leaders then became the participants' representatives. At the level of top decision-

making, the educational director was the leader of the leaders who were representing the participants. In meetings directed to the interests of the leaders and the groups they represented, she gave the authority to the leaders. In turn, the leaders returned to the educational director the authority to represent them in decisions for the Workshop and in writing the publication."

That there are difficulties for the administrator, as he functions in the training process, was illustrated by an action of the educational director in one of the leaders' meetings. At the end of this session, which had been directed to the leaders' theoretical interests, the educational director raised the question of the agenda for the evening meeting and listed a number of areas previously mentioned which had not yet been discussed and which should have consideration for the purposes of the ultimate publication of the material. This action had repercussions in the group process. Briefly, it represented a shift in the group leader's position from that of the leader of the group concerned with their interests to that of the administrator taking back authority and superimposing administrative concerns. Since this change in role was not made explicit, the group experienced it as evidence that their activity had been unappreciated and that they were being redirected. This was accompanied by feelings of irritation and resulted in markedly depressing group productivity in the evening session.

The following day there was discussion of this situation:

"The educational director asked for some further consideration of the nature of the administrative action which had interfered with group productivity the evening before, suggesting that there was here illustrated one of the hazards for administration as it becomes active in training. In the discussion of this point it became evident that the educational director had acted from unexpressed but heightened anxiety about administrative problems, although she had previously explicitly removed these concerns from the group's responsibility.

"The principle derived from the discussion of her action and its results in the group was to the effect that the administrator can always refocus the group on administrative concerns when this is necessary by explicitly reconstituting the group as an administrative advisory body. It is the insertion of authoritative action into a group which has been constituted as a 'moratorium from administrative responsibility' which interferes with productivity.

"From this discussion it emerged that the administrator as trainer must always keep the task of the group clear and explicit both for himself and for the group. The administrative person will always have some commitments which are not shared by the group.

"The group's help can be enlisted with these commitments, but not when the group is constituted for meeting the needs of the group rather than those of the administrator. These two processes cannot be efficiently mingled in the one activity, but have to be separated and handled one at a time, with explicit understanding by all of the nature of the task undertaken at a given time. It is also clear that neither as a training group nor as an advisory group can the staff be asked to make decisions that belong to the administrator."

From this analysis of the different roles of the same person as a leader in training and as the administrator of a job came several suggestions about depressants on group creativity as they had been observed in the Workshop and in the leaders' meetings.

### *Depressants on group creativity*

"The discussion began with noting that just as we had discussed how to create conditions which stimulate creativity in groups, it would also be well to note conditions which are depressants on group creativity. Several depressant conditions had been noted in the Workshop.

"In the small groups superimposition of theoretical frameworks by the leaders acted as a depressant.

"In the leaders' group 'the foreclosure of the moratorium' by the educational director had acted as a depressant. Probably, too active participation by the leader is a depressant since then the leader is perceived as 'carrying water on both shoulders,' acting as leader and participant at the same time.

"The implicit expression of 'hidden agendas' by the leader also acts as a depressant on group creativity.

"Authoritative action based on administrative power in a group set up for creative problem-solving is always a depressant."

### *The role of outside resource persons in staff training*

Since many institutions seek to supplement the knowledge of their own personnel by use of outside resource persons in training projects, the leaders gave attention to how such outside persons can participate in the training process which had been described. Since many of the leaders had worked with institutions in this way, they drew on their own experiences

for illustration. To quote:

"In general, it was agreed that one of the hazards of this process for the outside person is that the initial request for help in training may be for a lecture or series of lectures rather than for this sort of training. The problem for him is how to convert such a request into a process that actually addresses itself to problem-solving.

"Persons from the outside are brought in because of their expertness rather than because of position in the administrative hierarchy. Their power is therefore 'expert power' rather than formal bureaucratic power. The question is how to use 'expert power' to help the institution move through training toward change.

"Resource persons are usually given one of two assignments: to lead a group of staff members in some sort of training project; or to consult with administration about setting up training. It is to be noted, however, that the outsider is always brought in by an administrative hierarchy who delegates limited authority as group leader to the expert.

"It would follow then that the training process begins in the resource person's usefulness to the person responsible for training in the formal hierarchy. He will need to work through this person rather than act as a rival and his usefulness will depend on his never usurping the role of the institutional leader.

"It was agreed that working from the outside will be a slower process than is possible when the trainer has administrative responsibility for training within the hierarchy. He will need to start with a small area of influence, focusing on issues of real concern to the persons with formal power. His goal will be to help administratively responsible persons deal with their problems in a way which creates a 'built-in' training process in the institution.

"For the trainer in the institution, on the other hand, the problem may be that the resource person perceives himself as 'the expert' and expects to lecture. The trainer then has to help the resource person learn how to set up the kind of communication with the staff group that will contribute to their problem-solving activity."

The efficient use of resource persons in staff training in institutions would seem to depend on the ability of both the institution and the resource person not to fall into the trap of asking for and giving "the answers." Rather there should be a process of joint identification and exploration of problems, similar to the training process already described. As the re-

resource person becomes helpful various projects may be designed according to the need of the institution. Again such projects will be patterned differently in each institution. A course useful to one institution may not be what another institution needs. The planning process for the training project in which resource person and institutional staff together identify needs will itself be a major part of the training process.

### *Productive interdisciplinary work*

One of the important aspects of the Workshop was the use of six leaders, each of whom represented a different discipline. In this project, contrary to the usual pattern, they had not been used successively in separate sessions, each responsible for his own area of competence. Rather they had been used jointly with the groups for exploration of problem situations which required more than one kind of knowledge for examination and solution. The leaders noted that each institution is itself an interdisciplinary project depending on contributions from many bodies of knowledge and skill for the accomplishment of its task. They also noted that in most institutions as in most training projects, persons from different disciplines are used separately, in different departments, different staff meetings, and different training sessions. They asked, what was it about this Workshop that had heightened interdisciplinary communication and made it easier for them to work together and to learn from each other?

To quote again:

"The group turned to a consideration of this project as an experiment in interdisciplinary work. It was agreed that for each one this had been an unusual experience in learning to understand both the conceptual frameworks in use in other disciplines and the persons representing these other disciplines. This mutual understanding had contributed to their ability to help the groups think about problems. There was discussion of the question: What was it about this project that contributed to the high productivity in interdisciplinary work?

"A primary factor producing this high level of communication among persons from several disciplines seemed to be the common task orientation provided for the leaders in their responsibility for the groups of participants. Problem-solving was heightened by the task orientation, requiring that 'hidden agendas' be kept explicit to avoid interference with the job to be done. Having an eventual product, like the pamphlet, to which the accomplishment of the task would contribute, was also a useful device in stimulating commitment to interdisciplinary work. The opportunity to work at a task and then to conceptualize it after the task had been successfully completed provided jointly experienced



referents for interdisciplinary communication. The resulting formulations then made the most of contributions from each discipline and incorporated new insights not available to any one discipline.

"The way the common experience in working at a task contributed to interdisciplinary communication was illustrated by one leader who reported on his experience in the small group as follows: 'The participants identified a problem in training in the institution. They began by reporting their feelings about the problem. As they went on to analyze the problem, they described this same reality in terms of a series of role relationships. With no difficulty in changing conceptual frameworks, they then discussed the needs experienced by the persons because of the way these roles were defined and went on to describe how to meet these needs by modifying the role structure. These modifications were to be achieved both by changing perceptions of roles (intrapyschic change) and by redefining roles in the structure (social change). Thus, the same reality was discussed in terms calling upon the knowledge and theoretical perspectives of both the sociologist and the psychologist. In this process, both the sociologist and the psychologist made contributions; each learned what was meant by the other's formulations; and new formulations drawing on the perspective of each were achieved.' It should be noted that this leader was one in the team which had made its first report on the group activity in such diverse terms that the two leaders were asked if they had been in the same room with the same group.

"For each of the leaders the theoretical developments in this project made contributions to theoretical problems on which he is currently working in his own discipline. Particularly noticeable was the fact that there had been no unwillingness to share ideas in this group and no evidence of competitive need to protect an individual's ideas for prior right to publication. Someone observed that if each member of the group wrote an article on the project there would be seven different articles, each written from the perspective of the theoretical concerns of an individual with a different discipline.

"One of the outcomes of this experience seemed to be the creation of a unique communication system among the leaders, which could be fruitful for continuing collaboration in relation to shared theoretical concerns."

The leaders believed that there might be important implications in the design of this experience for other interdisciplinary projects, both in



academic groups and in staff training projects using the rich interdisciplinary resources of the institution.

## *Social work education and staff training*

Because professional schools of social work can be valuable resources to institutions as they undertake training projects the leaders discussed the relationship between academic education and the training of employed staff. Although it is clear that agencies must be and want to be responsible for the on-the-job training of their employees, it was believed that schools of social work can be helpful to agencies in this task. The following rationale for social work education's responsibility for staff training was proposed:

- 1 Social work has a strategic position in interdisciplinary work, that of creating the conditions for interaction of persons from different disciplines around a task of significance for service to people.
- 2 Social work education has a responsibility for the development of the professional services. This responsibility is well discharged by the process of training leaders in the services and sending them back into practice with new concepts which can help raise the level of service.
- 3 This process of reaching persons in practice through educational service is a sound approach to recruitment of students.
- 4 Social work faculties need the constant refreshment of relating ideas to practice. Such refreshment for the individual faculty member and for the faculty he represents can be particularly well achieved by training experiences with practice personnel.
- 5 Training projects organized as this one has been make important contributions to theory and can open significant areas for research. Thus, educational activity with agency staffs provides an important link between practice and research.

It was agreed that:

The school of social work should accept the investment of educational resources in projects of this sort as a positive function.

Selection among requests for help with staff training will depend on criteria such as:

Strategy in raising the level of service.

Crucial nature of theoretical questions implied in the task.

Contributions to theory and research potentially available in the task.

These findings are similar to the formulations on the relationships of social work education and staff training developed by such bodies as the Committee on Corrections of the Council on Social Work Education and the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee to the Training Branch of the Division of Juvenile Delinquency Service, Children's Bureau, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

# appendix

*Rutgers University, April 12, 1957.*

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